

Message Text

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45

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OPR-02 SY-03 A-01 OC-06 CCO-00 SCCT-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 NIC-01 AID-20

CU-04 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /136 W

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R 082301Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2741

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 1983

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, GT

SUBJECT: GRENADE THROWN INTO POLICE HOSPITAL

REF: GUATEMALA 1771

1. PRESS HAS REPORTED THAT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING AN APRIL 4 MEMORIAL MASS FOR ASSASSINATED JOURNALIST MARIO MONTERROSO, A FRAGMENTATION GRENADE WAS THROWN THOUGH WINDOW OF POLICE HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO CHURCH. NO ONE WAS INJURED BUT EXPLOSION REPORTEDLY CAUSED CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE TO HOSPITAL'S X-RAY EQUIPMENT. OPPOSITION FRONT HAS CONDEMNED INCIDENT AS ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT AGAINST MAYOR COLOM ARGUETA AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT LEOPOLDO URRUTIA, WHO WERE STANDING IN CHURCH DOORWAY AT TIME. MOST NEWSPAPERS HAVE INTERPRETED INCIDENT AS TERRORIST ATTACK AGAINST POLICE BY OPPOSITIONIST ELEMENTS WHO ATTENDED MONTERROSO FUNERAL.

2. COMMENT: THE FRONT'S STATMENT COULD WELL BE AN ATTEMPT
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TO AVOID RESPONSIBILITY FOR AN ACTION TAKEN BY ONE OF ITS

MORE EXTREMIST PARTISANS. WE HAVE NOTED DURING THE PAST TWO WEEKS AN INCREASE IN SIMILAR TERRORIST ACTIONS APPEARING TO STEM FROM LEFT. THE MOST SERIOUS INCIDENTS HAVE OCCURRED IN QUEZALTENANGO, WHERE INCENDIARY BOMBS EXPLODED IN THE HOME OF A GOVERNMENT COALITION CONGRESSMAN-ELECT APRIL 3 AND IN THE LOCAL COALITION HEADQUARTERS APRIL 2. LAST WEEK SABOTEURS CUT THE TELEPHONE LINES FOR MOST OF THE CITY OF QUEZALTENANGO AND REPORTEDLY LEFT NOTES IN THE CABLE BOXES ATTRIBUTING THE ACTION TO THE FAR. OTHER RECENT INCIDENTS OF A POSSIBLE TERRORIST NATURE HAVE BEEN A REPORTED ARSON ATTACK WHICH CAUSED HEAVY DAMAGE TO THE PUERTO BARRIOS MUNICIPALITY BUILDING APRIL 5 AND THE SABOTAGING OF TELEPHONE LINES IN ONE ZONE OF THE CAPITAL ON THE SAME DAY. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION INDICATING THAT THESE INCIDENTS ARE PART OF ANY EXTREMIST CAMPAIGN, BUT THEIR COINCIDENCE DURING A TWO-WEEK PERIOD IS UNUSUAL. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE NOTE THAT WHILE COLOM IMPLIED TO US ON MARCH 27 (REFTEL) THAT HE WOULD NOT TURN TO VIOLENT TACTICS, HE OPINED THAT "PEOPLE" DISGRUNTLED OVER ELECTORAL FRAUD WOULD DO SO SOONER OR LATER. THE GOG HAS MADE NO PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT THE RASH OF INCIDENTS.

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Message Attributes

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